Automotive News

September 17, 1990

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AUTOMOTIVE NEWS/JOE WILSSENS

STRIKE IN CANADA

The Canadian Auto Workers called a national strike against Ford Motor Co. late Friday when negotiators failed to come up with a contract to replace one that expired at midnight Friday. In Detroit, the UAW was talking with General Motors. In both cases, the union expects any new contract to be the pattern for other automakers. Reporters had kept up a vigil in Detroit, above, since Aug. 28.

Chevrolet offers rent-a-car program for U.S. dealers

By Phil Frame
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Next month Chevrolet will begin a program that offers its 4,700 dealers the chance to get into the daily rental car business.

The program is called the Chevrolet Geo Dealer Rent A Car System. It was tested this summer in Kansas City, Kan., and Kansas City, Mo., and was so well received that Chevrolet decided to offer the program nationally, sources said.

The intent of the program is to offer Chevrolet dealers the same price benefits given to daily rental companies, while providing extra incentives to help dealers enhance their used-car operations when the vehicles are taken out of the rental car fleet.

In a complicated set of transactions, participating dealers will order nearly any vehicle with equipment of their choosing, use them for daily rentals for four to 15 months, and then keep them for sale in their used-car departments.

Conversion vans and Corvettes cannot be ordered under the program, but apparently anything else is fair game. Certain option packages and models will carry incentives, but dealers are free to order what they want.

Chevrolet did not respond to *Automotive News* requests for an interview about the program.

Here's how the program works:

- Dealers first will buy the vehicles from General Motors, reaping the same fleet discounts offered to rental car companies.
- Then the vehicles are sold to General Motors Acceptance Corp. at invoice cost less dealer incentives.
- GMAC leases the vehicles back to the dealer for a monthly payment that includes a pre-set depreciation rate based on the model, interest that is less than one percentage point higher than the prime rate, and insurance based on the model and geographic area.
- Dealers keep vehicles in their rental fleets no less than 120 days and no more than 15 months.

Because dealers technically don't own the cars, only the amount of the lease payments are charged against their line of credit with GMAC. If dealers owned the vehicles, the full value would be charged against their credit line.

- When a dealer removes a vehicle from the rental fleet, he must buy it back from GMAC, but at a price that Chevrolet guarantees will be no more than the car's auction value. If the auction value of the vehicle is less than what is owed by GMAC to GM, Chevrolet will pay the difference.

GMAC benefits from the complicated structure because its leasing business increases.

Dealers benefit because they have a new profit center plus cars that can be used to improve customer satisfaction in the service department — rental cars that neither the dealer nor customer may have to pay for directly.

"A vast majority of service con-

see RENTALS, page 46

Ford considers '93 Suburban fighter

Based on F-series, 40,000 to be built

By Laura Clark
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Ford Division plans to introduce a Chevrolet/GMC Suburban-fighter in the 1993 model year that will be based on the popular F-series truck.

Engineering and other company sources say the program has not been approved by the corporation, though preliminary plans are in the works.

During the past years, two truck converters, Magnum Motor Coach of Sturgis, Mich., and Centurion Vehicles of White Pigeon, Mich., have been making a Suburban-type vehicle that is based on F-series and Bronco chassis and parts.

Magnum has been marketing a Suburban look-alike called the Metropolitan since 1987. The Metropolitan comes in half-ton, three-quarter-ton and one-ton configurations on Ford F-150, F-250 and F-350 chassis. The vehicle is assembled from Ford parts.

Magnum President Ed Dinsmore

see FORD, page 45

EUROPE'S 1990s: *Tailgated by Japanese upstarts, Europe's makers race to exploit strengths, tap new segments in record time*

European automakers are the focus of this second leg in a series on product plans for the 1990s.

By Richard Johnson
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

FUTURE PRODUCTS

FRANKFURT, West Germany — Europe's car industry has found a new reason to fear the Japanese. Makers are concerned about the threat high-liners like Toyota's Lexus and Honda's NSX pose to the dominance of top European brands.

Increasingly, the line in auto industry circles is that the new Japanese cars are so good that the European luxury-class and performance-car specialists could be undercut. The worries are not for this year or next, but later in the decade — the period on which product planners are now focusing.

Europe is still concentrating on its traditional strength — ultra-smooth sedans that range upward to next year's breathlessly awaited Mercedes-Benz S class. Europe also is developing into a supercar haven — there are projects in Italy, Germany and England inspired by Porsche's 959 and Ferrari's F40. It will be shocking if the S class is not a terrific specimen and does not wrest the unofficial

see EUROPE, page 38

HIDDEN IMAGE/HANS G. LEMMERER

Mercedes-Benz's new S-class hews in March and adopts some of the aerodynamic styling cues made popular on the 300 series.

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NEWSPAPER

model car build plummets 11%

ngs cut U.S. total while Canada output climbs. Story on Page 48.

New Chrysler dealer rebates have flavor of old push-pull

By Francis J. Gawronski
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Chrysler Corp. has adopted a modified push-pull type incentive program for dealers, featuring factory set purchase and sales quotas based on the dealership's size, stock and sales record.

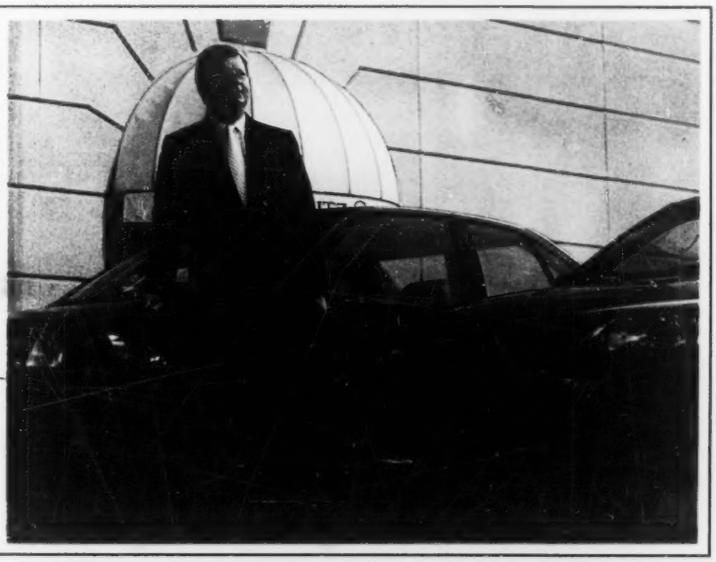
The program is more like a nudge-pull than a traditional push-pull program, which many manufacturers — including Chrysler — foreswore a decade ago in favor of retail incentives and other less-drastic wholesale incentive spiffs.

In a traditional push-pull program, dealers must purchase a given number of cars "pushed" by the factory in order to participate in programs in which they earn cash for meeting retail sales quotas, which "pull" the cars out of the dealership.

Chrysler's current program, which runs from September through Dec. 31 and covers all 1989, 1990 and 1991 vehicles, pays dealers cash rebates of $250 per unit sold between 50.1 percent and 75 percent of their sales quota, $750 per unit between 75.1 percent 99.9 percent and $1,000 for each unit over 100 percent of quota.

For example, if a dealer who has a sales objective of 50 cars

see INCENTIVES, page 46



High hopes
Infiniti General Manager William Bruce, shown flanked by G20 sedans, predicted sales of 40,000 cars in 1991 — more than twice this year's expected total — at a media preview of the 1991 line. See Page 6 for details on Infiniti, Mazda, Nissan and Mercedes-Benz. previews.

AUTOMOTIVE NEWS/JOE WILSSENS

Sept. 1-10 sales climb 2%

By Kathy Jackson
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Buoyed by strong sales of transplant-built cars, early September U.S. car and truck sales rose 2.41 percent over the Sept. 1-10 period last year.

A total of 216,374 cars and trucks were sold in the period, an increase of 5,098 units.

Car sales were up 6.70 percent to 139,717 units; truck sales declined 4.57 percent to 76,657. Each period had seven selling days.

Ford Motor Co. was the only Big 3 maker to report increased overall sales. Car sales were off 0.69 percent, but truck sales rose 9.24 percent to give Ford a 3.77 percent increase over 1989 early-September sales.

In car sales, Ford's biggest support continues to come from its Lincoln brand. Sales were up for all three models, hiking Lincoln sales 33.96 percent over the first 10 days of September last year.

Escort sales, which have been weak most of the year, increased 13.88 percent or 876 units.

Sales of the Thunderbird, Cougar and Probe continued to falter: Cougar sales were off 50.47 percent, Probe's plunged 48.45 percent, and Thunderbird's dropped 38.32 percent.

General Motors' car sales rose 6.40 percent, but truck sales tumbled 13.82 percent, pulling GM's overall sales down 1.09 percent.

GM received positive results

see SALES, page 45

10-DAY SALES

DOMESTIC BUILT CARS

	Sept. 1-10, 1990	% change '90 vs. '89
Eagle	1,036	+ 4.33
Chrysler	3,348	+ 17.43
Dodge	7,627	– 5.75
Plymouth	3,973	– 44.22
CHRYSLER MTRS.	**15,984**	**– 15.90**
Ford	24,508	– 2.61
Lincoln	4,592	+ 33.96
Mercury	6,639	– 10.19
FORD MOTOR	**35,739**	**– 0.69**
Buick	12,823	– 19.32
Cadillac	4,974	– 13.89
Chevrolet	24,806	+ 8.58
Oldsmobile	11,449	– 24.12
Pontiac	16,645	+ 38.85
GENERAL MTRS.	**70,697**	**+ 6.40**
HONDA	**10,234**	**+ 89.10**
MAZDA	**931**	**+ 82.91**
MITSUBISHI	**768**	**+ 21.74**
NISSAN	**1,753**	**+ 164.15**
SUBARU	**334**	**—**
TOYOTA	**3,277**	**+ 70.94**
U.S. CAR TOTAL	**139,717**	**+ 6.70**
TRUCKS		
Chrysler	64	– 0.99
Dodge	6,710	– 14.84
Jeep	3,655	– 24.34
Plymouth	2,326	– 9.98
CHRYSLER MTRS.	**12,755**	**– 16.99**
FORD MOTOR	**27,571**	**+ 9.24**
Chevrolet	25,871	– 13.18
GMC	6,495	– 29.81
Oldsmobile	605	—
Pontiac	684	—
GENERAL MTRS.	**33,655**	**– 13.82**
ISUZU	**229**	**—**
NISSAN	**2,447**	**+ 175.25**
U.S. TRK. TOTAL	**76,657**	**– 4.57**
U.S. CAR-TRUCK TOTAL	**216,374**	**+ 2.41**

There were 7 selling days in the period this year and last year.

No plant before its time

Toyota sits on decision to add assembly site

By Lindsay Chappell
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Toyota Motor Co. is inching closer to building a new North American assembly plant, but the automaker says the final decision won't come until at least next year.

Toshiaki Taguchi, general manager of the company's North America Division in Tokyo, said the company will likely announce its decision in 1991 or 1992.

The Wall Street Journal reported last week that a decision on the new plant was expected within 30 to 60 days. But Yoshiharu Tateishi, manager of Toyota's International Public Affairs Division, said there was a misunderstanding between the paper and a U.S. Toyota spokesman. The spokesman, according to Tateishi, had only said he hoped there would be a decision within two months.

U.S. Toyota officials have said that another American manufacturing plant is necessary to satisfy its growing market, and they have been anticipating an announcement from Tokyo. But no decision has been reached on the plant's site, its scale or its product, officials said.

Meanwhile, Toyota announced plans to build a new $50 million aluminum casting plant in Troy, Mo., to supply cylinder heads and intake manifolds to its Georgetown, Ky., powertrain plant.

The new Troy plant will operate under the name Bodine Aluminum Inc., an 80-year-old St. Louis company that Toyota Motor Corporate Services of North America Inc. in New York acquired late last year. It will begin supplying parts in January 1993.

The new foundry will use low-pressure casting methods in producing cylinder heads, a technology that is common in Japan but still rare among American foundries. Additional products eventually may be added for the 100-employee foundry, including products for other automakers.

Growing ties to the Georgetown operation have led some industry observers to assume that Toyota's next assembly plant will be built there. The two-year-old, $1.3 billion Camry and powertrain complex sits on a 1,300-acre tract that remains nearly two-thirds vacant.

In addition to building the Camry in Kentucky, Toyota produces the Corolla in Cambridge, Ontario, and at New United Motors Manufacturing Inc., a 50-50 joint venture with General Motors in Fremont, Calif. Toyota plans to build small pickups at NUMMI next year.

Automotive News Editor Peter Brown in Tokyo contributed to this report.

New Ford prices show 1.9% rise, down from 3.2%

By Laura Clark
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Ford Motor Co. took a closer look at its pre-introductory 1991 car prices and decided they were not one of the company's better ideas.

Ford announced firm prices for its fall-launch 1991 cars last week and said they are up an average of 1.9 percent over final 1990 model-year prices. *Automotive News* estimates the increase at $312. The increase is sales weighted and is based on comparably equipped models.

The firm 1991 prices were chopped significantly from the pre-introduction stickers announced in July. At that time, Ford said its car boost averaged 3.2 percent or $528.

Ford spokesman David Krupp said the changes reflect the current sales environment and competitive actions. He declined to comment on whether specific changes were made to be more competitive with General Motors and Chrysler Corp., which have announced hikes of 2.3 percent and 0.9 percent on 1991 cars.

At a news conference last week, Ford Chairman Harold Poling said the company thought its major competitors (read GM) would not be as active in offering discounts on option packages as they have been in the past. Ford was wrong, thus the new pricing.

see PRICES, page 48

1991 FORD PRICES

	1991 Price	Increase over end of 1990 model year
FORD Festiva		
L hatch	$ 6,620	$ 301
GL hatch	7,460	—
Escort		
Pony hatch	7,976	411
LX hatch	8,667	420
LX 5-dr.	9,095	421
LX wagon	9,680	421
GT hatch	11,484	421
Probe		
GL	11,691	221
LX	13,229	221
GT	14,964	238
Tempo		
GL 2-dr.	9,541	0
GL 4-dr.	9,691	0
GLS 2-dr.	10,358	0
GLS 4-dr.	10,506	0
LX 4-dr.	10,663	0
4-dr. awd	11,390	0
Mustang		
LX coupe	10,157	643
LX hatch	10,663	543
LX conv.	16,222	1,023
LX 5.0L coupe	13,270	1,048
LX 5.0L hatch	14,055	990
LX 5.0L conv.	19,242	1,001
GT hatch	15,034	990
GT conv.	19,864	1,001
Taurus		
L sedan	13,352	651
L wagon	14,784	451
GL sedan	13,582	408
GL wagon	14,990	207
LX sedan	17,373	1,132
LX wagon	18,963	1,131
SHO sedan	22,071	377
Thunderbird		
Standard	15,318	277
LX	17,734	410
Super coupe	20,999	548
LTD Crown Victoria		
Sedan	18,227	555
Wagon	18,083	0
LX sedan	$18,863	$ 555
LX wagon	18,833	0
Country Squire wgn.	18,335	0
LX Country Squire wgn.	19,085	0
LINCOLN Town Car		
Executive 4-dr.	29,458	1,349
Signature 4-dr.	32,416	1,572
Cartier 4-dr.	34,504	1,527
Continental		
Executive 4-dr.	30,211	666
Signature 4-dr.	32,120	651
Mark VII		
LSC	30,238	647
Bill Blass	30,362	993
MERCURY Tracer		
4-dr.	9,386	417
Wagon	10,407	417
LTS 4-dr.	11,636	417
Capri		
Convertible	12,990	402
XR7 conv.	15,920	398
Topaz		
GS 2-dr.	10,065	0
GS 4-dr.	10,222	0
XR-5 2-dr.	11,064	0
LS 4-dr.	11,601	0
LTS 4-dr.	12,626	0
Sable		
GS 4-dr.	15,311	185
GS wagon	16,256	185
LS 4-dr.	16,154	26
LS wagon	17,124	25
Cougar		
Base	15,629	–248
XR7	20,905	631
Grand Marquis		
GS 4-dr.	18,741	542
LS 4-dr.	19,241	542
Colony Park GS wgn.	18,918	0
Colony Park LS wgn.	19,490	0

Correction

Totals for August 1989 imported light-truck sales were listed in the wrong order in a table last week. Here is the correct order:

Imported light-truck sales	Aug. 1989
Daihatsu	0
Isuzu	11,054
Mazda	11,359
Mitsubishi	3,872
Nissan	20,682
Range Rover	398
Suzuki	2,569
Toyota	32,542
Volkswagen	481
Total	**82,257**

Porsche plans sedan; 1 car line to be axed

By Richard Johnson
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

ZUFFENHAUSEN, West Germany — After years of deliberation, Porsche AG has charted a product development course for the 1990s that includes two instead of three product lines and development of a full four-seat and possibly four-door "sports car" to replace the 928.

Porsche's supervisory board met here last week to approve the strategic plans. But a company insider said the key decisions had already been made at the senior management level.

The new, premium-priced four-seater is not destined to arrive before about 1995. That means a full 18 years will have elapsed since introduction of the last all-new Porsche model — the 928 in 1977.

The 27-year-old 911 model will stay in production until at least the year 2000. The V-8-powered 928 and 4-cylinder 944 models will tumble out of the lineup, but not for at least five years and not before getting improvements, such as a deep facelift for the 944 in a year.

Porsche officials won't comment officially on future product plans, but insiders say the company has determined that it must no longer offer a range of models that are so closely aligned — in effect three 2+2s with only token rear seats. The 928 was originally intended to replace the 911 but it never achieved a broad sales base. And the 911, instead of being pensioned off, continued to evolve as an evergreen model.

Two years ago, Porsche introduced a new 911 that is known internally as the 964. The new car was substantially changed, incorporating technologies from the 959 supercar/rolling testbed that appeared in 1987. Production of 911 models totaled 18,756

see PORSCHE, page 48

Citroen faces 3 obstacles in return to U.S. market

By Jim Crate
INTERNATIONAL EDITOR

PARIS — The chief executive of Automobiles Citroen says his company's re-entry into the U.S. market with the upscale XM sedan has been delayed because of currency exchange rates, Japanese competition and the need to prepare a second model for U.S. sale.

Separately, a spokesman for Peugeot S.A., Citroen's parent, said Peugeot will begin shipping its 605 luxury sedan to the United States by the final quarter of 1991.

The Citroen XM and the 605 share a common platform, although the cars differ markedly in technology and styling. Sales of each this year are expected to be about 100,000 units in Europe.

Citroen said in April that it planned to return to the U.S. market, but not before 1992. In an interview here last week, however, Citroen chief Xavier Karcher firmly linked a U.S. launch of the car to the development of an unspecified second model for the U.S. lineup, which would be required to create a quality dealer network. The best candidate for the XM's stable mate won't be ready for the home market until at least 1992.

"We are working very hard on adapting the XM for the United States, but we have two very serious concerns," said Karcher.

One major fear, he said, is Japanese competition. Japanese carmakers captured 30 percent of the U.S. market last month, while such European lines as Volvo, Mercedes-Benz and BMW declined.

A second concern, Karcher said, is how to set up an American dealer network independent of Peugeot. Citroen's studies have shown that dealers must have more than one product, he said.

Karcher said the new small car being prepared for introduction at the Geneva auto show next spring will definitely not accompany the XM to the United States. That would leave Citroen's as-yet unnamed replacement for the BX, its entry in the mid-range segment, as the most likely choice, but that car is not expected before 1992.

Currency exchange rates also are working against U.S. exports.

The current rate of about 5.30 francs to the dollar would make the U.S. price of the XM about $40,000, he said, positioning it with or slightly above the Lexus LS400, Infiniti Q45 and new Acura.

"This is a very high price for the U.S. market, especially in view of the first concern I mentioned — the growing penetration of Japanese producers," Karcher said.

At 6.5 francs to the dollar, the XM would sell at about $33,000, he said. "This would position us better; that is where we would want to be," he said.

Meanwhile, a Peugeot spokesman said, "We have already accounted for the development costs (of the 605) on the U.S. market and are ready to go."

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GM upshifting to electronics

By Phil Frame
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

General Motors is pushing ahead with its plans to add electronic shift controls to all of its automatic transmissions by the mid-1990s despite uncertainties posed by the Persian Gulf crisis, increased competition in a down market and proposed clean air and fuel economy standards.

Each new transmission project costs $400 million to $500 million, according to sources at GM's Hydra-matic Division. In a down market, such outlays might seem prime for cut backs, but sources said GM knows it can't afford to lose more ground to competitors.

Competition is dictating that automatic transmissions have electronics and no fewer than four forward gears. Electronics offer smoother, more consistent shifts from car to car, and provide more flexibility to change transmission dynamics by rewriting software — which is easier and less costly than changing hardware and tooling.

A fourth gear improves vehicle performance and economy — key factors driven by the marketplace and government regulators.

This month the division introduced its newest transmission, the 4L80-E for rear-wheel-drive light-to medium-duty trucks, its fourth with electronic controls.

The four-speed 4L80-E will get 20 percent better fuel economy than the model it will ultimately replace — the three-speed 3L80, which was introduced in 1962.

Precise control of shifting pattern and feel, available only from an electronic transmission that can react to changes in altitude, temperature and engine performance, makes transmission efficiency and reliability advancements possible, said Alexander Rasegan, Hydra-matic's general director of product and process engineering.

Once electronics are added to a transmission, an automaker gains the ability to reprogram controls to achieve different goals. Instead of taking all of the fuel economy savings achieved with an electronic transmission, a company could add a larger, more powerful engine with no loss in economy.

Conversion to electronic transmissions seems tailor-made for GM because its six car and truck divisions have diverse audiences.

GM's next automatic transmission will be the 4T80-E, due in 1993 in conjunction with the new Northstar V-8 engines.

The 4T80-E will replace the last of the non-electronic 4T60 transmissions, in production since 1984, and spells the end of the F7, an electronic 4T60 version that has been available only on the Allante.

Following shortly will be the 4L60-E, a four-speed gearbox due in 1993 for rwd big cars, performance cars and light trucks. The 4L60-E is designed to replace the 4L60, which debuted in 1983.

The last transmission to switch to electronics will be the 11-year-old, three-speed 3T40, Hydra-matic's highest-volume model.

Hydra-matic and GM have been mulling over the 3T40's replacement for more than a year, and there still is no approved program. In fact, four development programs were put in place as possible successors: X1F, X2F, X3F and X4F.

The X1F was to be a four-speed version intended only for the North American market. It would have been brought out with the X2F, a five-speed version for Europe.

Those two programs were combined to form the X3F, which was intended to be a four-speed for use in both markets. At that point, the market seemed headed toward five-speed automatic transmissions, and neither GM nor Hydra-matic wanted to be without a five-speed option, sources said.

A decision was made in late 1989 to focus on the X4F, a four-speed that would have the flexibility of allowing an extra forward gear to be added, if necessary. The earliest the X4F could see production is 1995, sources said.

GM ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION PLAN

Electronic transmission	Intro (model year)	Vehicles	Replaced transmission
4L30-E	1988	Opel Omega, Senator; Isuzu Trooper	3L30[1]
4T60-E	1991	Buick Century, Park Avenue, Ultra, Riviera, Regal, Reatta; Cadillac DeVille, Fleetwood; Chevrolet Celebrity, Lumina cars; Oldsmobile Cutlass Ciera, 98, Toronado, 88, Cutlass Supreme; Pontiac 6000, Bonneville, Grand Prix	4T60[2]
4L80-E	1991	Heavier rwd light trucks; armored limosines; school buses; recreational vehicles	3L80[1]
4L60-E	1993	Buick Roadmaster, Roadmaster Estate wagon; Cadillac Brougham; Chevrolet Caprice, Caprice wagon, Corvette, Camaro; Pontiac Firebird; rwd pickups and vans	4L60
4T80-E	1993	Cadillac Allante, Eldorado, Seville	F7[3]
X4F[4] (4T40-E)	1995	Buick Century, Skylark; Chevrolet Celebrity, Corsica, Beretta, Lumina cars & APV; Oldsmobile Cutlass Ciera, Calais, Silhouette; Pontiac 6000, Sunbird, Grand Am, Trans Sport	3T40

1 Will remain in limited production indefinitely for specialty vehicles.
2 Will remain in production indefinitely. 4T60 also used on Cadillac Eldorado and Seville, which get 4T80-E in 1993.
3 F7 is a four-speed electronic transmission used only on the Cadillac Allante.
4 Project not approved. 4T40-E model number is assumed.

SHOW TIME: *First out of the gate, Britain strives to gain prestige with more debuts*

By Daniel Ward
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

LONDON — The British International Motor Show has for years played the poor relation to the Paris auto show because it was held a month later. But for 1990, the event has jumped ahead of Paris in an effort to gain prestige and debut more new models.

The ploy appears to have worked. There will be no major launches at Paris in October, but Birmingham (Sept. 22-30) will have a good showing of new models, headed by the premier of the new European Ford Escort, which will be displayed on a show stand half the size of a soccer field.

A five-door Land Rover Discovery, above, will debut at Birmingham, England, Sept. 22, as will the United Kingdom-built Nissan Primera, left.

Escort is a very important car for Ford of Europe, which expects to sell 650,000 annually. But early press reports in the United Kingdom have been particularly unfavorable, criticizing dull styling, spartan interiors and dated four-cylinder powertrains.

In Britain, Ford has lost two percentage points of market share so far this year in a weak market. As discounting by manufacturers and dealers is stepped up, Ford has come under pricing pressure from an aggressive Vauxhall Motors, a General Motors subsidiary.

Vauxhall will unveil a facelifted Nova with a smoother nose in the GM Europe style and a much-needed new interior. The Vauxhall Carlton/Opel Omega is beginning to show its age and lose sales, so its exterior has been smartened up. And a revised 2.6-liter six-cylinder engine from the Senator has been added to the range.

see BIRMINGHAM, page 48

U.S., Japan makers push new oil grading system

By Francis J. Gawronski
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Carmakers will soon have more to say about the quality of oil available to auto buyers.

New oil specifications were published in May by the International Lubricant Standardization and Approval Committee. The committee was formed by the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association and the Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association.

The associations solicited comments from interested parties in North America and Japan. The two trade groups will review comments and the committee will issue final specifications in the fall which will probably take effect for the 1992 model year.

"So far, comments on the specifications themselves have been generally favorable," said James Steiger, director of fuels, lubricants and special projects for MVMA.

"Our members' principle product is cars, not oil," he said. "The oil standardization and approval system will simply help car buyers get everything out of their cars that the manufacturers design into them."

The joint initiative by the manufacturers, according to Steiger, should ensure that the quality of oil available to new-car buyers keeps pace with rapidly advancing oil and engine technology and with automaker requirements.

According to MVMA, the international committee's specifications — precise technical requirements for the physical and chemical properties of engine oils — are the cornerstone of an international engine oil standardization and approval system being developed by the two auto trade associations, whose members produce nearly 94 percent of all cars sold in North America.

The new international committee specs, MVMA said, are distinct from the current oil classification overseen by a tripartite panel representing the American Petroleum Institute, the American Society for Testing and Materials, and the SAE.

Although the new specs will use many of the same technical testing procedures as the tripartite system, they will impose higher standards for such parameters that impact engine and emissions equipment longevity.

The tripartite system takes too long to respond to engine improvement by manufacturers, Steiger said, noting that grades SF and SG, the two latest oil classifications, took eight and seven years, respectively, to come to market.

"We had cars on the road in the early 1980s that required the SG grade," Steiger said. "But because of delays and inflexibility of some of the procedures within the tripartite system, oil of that classification wasn't widely available until the 1989 model year."

Citing an SAE survey, Steiger said 9 to 17 percent of engine oil on the retail market since 1987 has been mislabled.

Oil meeting the international committee's specifications will be readily identifiable to consumers by a distinctive symbol on the product labels of oil marketers who voluntarily agree to meet the new standards, Steiger said.

"The American Petroleum Institute would probably prefer that we stick with the old system," said Michael L. McMillan, chairman of the lubricants standard committee for MVMA, "but it is a cumbersome, confusing and time-consuming system.

"The six- to eight-year timeframe from when a type of oil is needed and when it is widely available is just too long," he said. "Also, a number of studies have shown that some of the oils on shelves do not conform to their American Petroleum Institute labels."

McMillan said the international committee hopes to do a series of dynamometer tests in an independent laboratory as part of its policing program.

"Today, oil samples are collected and only chemical physical properties of the samples can be checked," he said.

McMillan said the petroleum institute's "labeling is confusing to consumers. It's an alphabet-soup of a system."

Asked why MVMA didn't petition the institute to change its methods of evaluating and labeling oil, McMillan said, "We did. This initiative has been going on for about three years. I think they finally see the need for change. But you may have to ask them what their opinion is."

Don Johnson, vice president of product engineering for Pennzoil Product Co. in Houston and chairman of the institute's lubricant subcommittee, said the institute spent "a lot of money on market research and was on the verge of coming out with a new oil program in October 1988 when MVMA said it wanted new certification system."

"Our point is that in the last two years the institute has improved the entire certification system tremendously in both the area of speed of introduction of new categories of oils and higher quality products, as well as the enforcement of the institute's symbol licensing program," Johnson said. "We believe the present system is dynamic and effective."

Johnson said the Institute is working to identify a higher performance category for oils within the system. He also noted the institute's SG symbol, the highest category for performance oil, was introduced two years ago and that a new one will be announced next year.

Automotive News Staff Reporter Jack Keebler contributed to this report.

Service business posts increase

By Francis J. Gawronski
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Service and parts business at new-car dealerships in July rebounded from June's decline to register a healthy increase over the year-earlier volume.

In July, according to the Automotive News Service Index, shop volume rose 9.3 percent over the volume recorded in the same month in 1989. June's volume dipped to 99.3 percent of the total reported by dealers in the year-earlier month.

Service and parts business for January 1990 to July 1990 was 7.3 percent above the 1989 period.

July was the first month since April that all five indicators used in the Service Index showed gains. Some dealers attributed the good showing to increased vehicle sales and warranty work, while others said aggressive service selling and promotions were responsible for the rise.

The No. 1 indicator in July was total labor sales (customer-paid and warranty), which posted an increase of 12.0 percent over the year-earlier volume. Shop parts sales, those used on both customer-paid and warranty repairs, were up 9.3 percent.

Gross profit on all labor, parts and accessory sales — the most important indicator from the dealers' viewpoint — was up 8.5 percent for the month, and sales of all parts and accessories recorded a gain of 6.9 percent. Repair orders written were up 3.5 percent, the biggest advance since April.

Dealers' service and parts business in the January to July period climbed 7.3 percent over the volume for the year-ago period.

The seven-month indicators lined up this way: total labor sales, up 7.5 percent; sales of all parts and accessories, up 7.1 percent; shop parts sales, up 7.0 percent; gross profit, up 5.9 percent; and repair orders written, up 0.9 percent.

Figures used in the Service Index are averages compiled from reports on shop operations from a cross-section of the nation's new-car dealerships.

SERVICE INDEX
109.3★

	July '90 vs. July '89	Jan.-July '90 vs. Jan.-July '89
Gross Profit on All Labor and P&A Sales	+ 8.5%	+ 5.9%
Repair Orders Written	+ 3.5%	+ 0.9%
Total Labor Sales (Customer & Warranty)	+12.0%	+ 7.5%
Shop Parts Sales (Customer & Warranty)	+ 9.3%	+ 7.0%
Sales of All P&A	+ 6.9%	+ 7.1%

★ Survey by Automotive News shows that dealers' service and parts business in July 1990 was 109.3 percent of business in July 1989. Service business in the first 7 months of 1990 was 107.3 percent of business in the corresponding period in 1989.

Examining a pickup bed liner during a product display at Livernois Vehicle Co. are, from left, Loring Ebersole, buyer; Mike Skinner, purchasing specialist for Ford Parts and Service Division; and William Buelcher of Ventre Corp., a supplier of accessories to Ford Motor Co.

Ford program to aid design, testing of accessory parts

By Francis J. Gawronski
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

A program to improve the efficiency of accessory parts design and development has been initiated by the Parts and Service Division of Ford Motor Co.

According to Mitch Moran, parts and accessories engineering development and test section coordinator for the division, the new program for supplier parts testing, installation and development is being operated in partnership with the Livernois Group of Dearborn, Mich., a vendor that acts as a liaison between the division and third-party vendors.

"This new program will reduce the cost and development time of new Ford-approved accessories," Moran said. "To the accessory part manufacturer, it means getting into the marketplace more quickly and, as a result, more sales."

According to Moran, the division's parts and accessories engineering staff reviews, installs and tests new accessories submitted to Ford. If revisions are required, the supplier can develop the part itself or retain Livernois to improve the fit and/or function of the accessory before resubmitting it to Ford.

Because of its other Ford-related engineering work, Livernois has access to Ford's prototype fleet, drawings and sheet metal, said Cliff Irey, general manager of Livernois Vehicle Co. He said that this access enables Livernois to easily and quickly estimate accessory installation costs, to issue test requests and to notify parts suppliers of vehicle availability dates.

The Livernois Group comprises six companies offering total metal-working industry capabilities. In addition to the vehicle company, the firms are Livernois Engine Co., Livernois Tool and Die Co., Livernois Automation Co., Livernois Technical Placement Co. and Livernois Forward Industries Co., a maker of nitrogen die cylinder systems.

"The new program is designed to reduce paperwork, expedite supplier/planner product reviews, installations and modifications, and decrease product development time to reach the market," Moran said.

The firm employs 350 people and had sales in excess of $350 million in 1989.

Florida teaches 'autotronics'

By Patricia A. Kelsey
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — A pilot program designed to teach entry-level and existing automobile service technicians the art of "autotronics" is under way in Florida.

The program, believed to be the first of its kind in the country, is geared to turning out service technicians capable of addressing the needs of today's electronically oriented vehicles, said T.L. Rushing, director of industrial education for the Florida Department of Education.

"In today's marketplace, you need an electronic technician," he said, "not just a guy who's good with his hands. Those days are gone forever."

To revamp the state's admittedly outdated program, the department formed an industry-technical committee/advisory board, which garnered input from representatives of major domestic and import manufacturers, independents shops and educators.

What developed after two years of work was a two-phase program.

The first step was to develop what Rushing calls a core training program for entry-level applicants. Students with no auto experience learn the basics, according Rushing.

It's a certification-structured course where in one year a student will emerge broadly trained.

The second part of the program is the update, which includes instruction using a computer hooked up to a new vehicle so faults can be inserted from the instructor's console for students to troubleshoot.

The two-year autotronics course is available in five centers across the state.

Isuzu beefs up '91 warranties

CITY OF INDUSTRY, Calif. — American Isuzu Motors Inc. has expanded warranty coverage for all 1991 vehicles.

Under the improved warranty plan, basic coverage and air conditioning coverage remain at 36 months but mileage is extended from 36,000 to 50,000.

Protection against perforation or rust-through corrosion is changed, from five years/unlimited mileage to six years/100,000 miles.

Powertrain protection jumps from 36 months/36,000 miles to five years/60,000 miles.

Sept. supplies of new cars up to 65 days

By Kathy Jackson
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Hampered by the crisis in the Middle East and a slow August sales month, combined new-car inventories rose to a 65-day supply on Sept. 1.

The average Sept. 1 inventory level is a 51-day supply.

There were a total of 1,874,130 U.S.-built and imported cars on hand Sept. 1, compared to 1,896,583 on Aug. 1 when there was a combined 58-day supply.

Strong incentive-aided sales last August, the best selling month of 1989, cut Sept. 1, 1989, inventories to a 56-day supply.

On Sept. 1, U.S. carmakers had 1,336,897 cars on hand or a 64-day supply, the fourth lowest days' supply total this year. Domestic stocks stood at a lean 56-day supply in August.

The import supply stood at 537,233 cars on Sept. 1 for a 66-day supply, compared to a 65-day supply on Aug. 1.

Only Nissan, Toyota and Subaru reduced their days' supply of domestically built and imported cars.

General Motors began Sept. 1 with 697,001 unsold U.S.-built and captive import cars for a 74-day supply, a 25 percent increase over the 59-day supply on Aug. 1.

Ford Motor Co.'s combined inventories rose by 6,500 units from Aug. 1 to Sept. 1, as days' supply rose from 59 days to 68 days.

Chrysler Corp.'s inventory level jumped from a 63-day supply on Aug. 1 to 79 days on Sept. 1.

IMPORT VEHICLES, DAYS' SUPPLIES

	Sept. 1, 1990	Aug. 1, 1990	Sept. 1, 1989
Car			
Chevrolet	127	81	53
Chrysler Motors	106	90	167
Acura	47	49	36
Daihatsu	75	77	75
Honda	24	18	23
Infiniti	43	40	—
Isuzu	564	396	27
Lexus	16	22	—
Mazda	52	39	37
Mitsubishi	101	94	60
Nissan	84	83	79
Subaru	72	93	77
Suzuki	123	139	125
Toyota	44	57	29
JAPAN	**62**	**59**	**51**
Audi	141	186	110
BMW	70	62	67
Mercedes-Benz	41	41	44
Mercury	62	67	68
Porsche	67	68	80
Volkswagen	135	139	106
GERMANY	**91**	**95**	**88**
Alfa Romeo	122	85	135
Ford	84	67	113
Hyundai	41	54	36
Jaguar	49	66	29
Peugeot	79	75	91
Pontiac	51	46	68
Eagle/Chrysler	185	228	290
Saab	47	41	64
Sterling	55	52	69
Volvo	77	97	47
Yugo	87	80	134
Other Countries	**83**	**85**	**58**
Total Import Cars	**66**	**66**	**55**
Truck			
Daihatsu	52	57	—
Geo Tracker*	83	88	211
Isuzu*	143	169	27
Mazda	27	50	55
Mitsubishi	52	42	56
Nissan*	49	48	24
Range Rover	72	52	51
Suzuki*	116	111	84
Toyota	13	21	30
Dodge	145	128	186
Total Imp. Trucks	**43**	**51**	**42**
Total Imp. Vehicles	**60**	**62**	**52**

*Includes domestic vehicles
†Includes cars built in Brazil and Mexico

DOMESTIC CARS, DAYS' SUPPLIES

	Sept. 1, 1990	Aug. 1, 1990	Sept. 1, 1989
Talon	104	73	124
Premier	33	41	65
Total Eagle	**60**	**54**	**73**
Horizon	76	65	22
Laser	119	92	61
Sundance	70	83	35
Reliant	—	—	73
Acclaim	67	38	86
Total Plymouth	**77**	**53**	**47**
LeBaron A	66	56	—
LeBaron J	94	48	117
LeBaron GTS	—	—	179
Fifth Avenue (rwd)	—	—	37
Fifth Avenue (fwd)	128	105	—
Imperial	148	140	—
New Yorker C	99	36	69
Total Chrysler	97	57	92
Omni	82	72	20
Shadow	64	61	30
Monaco	28	38	—
Daytona	126	94	87
Aries	—	—	71
Lancer	—	—	152
Spirit	78	48	102
Dynasty	61	64	53
Total Dodge	**70**	**62**	**53**
CHRYSLER MOTORS	**77**	**60**	**58**
Escort	68	67	61
Mustang	63	71	61
Tempo	64	55	68
Taurus	36	63	47
Thunderbird	112	75	53
Probe	53	34	74
Crown Victoria	69	63	35
Total Ford Div.	**69**	**60**	**58**
Topaz	62	54	68
Sable	74	50	48
Cougar	83	59	57
Grand Marquis	53	61	28
Total Mercury	**70**	**56**	**50**
Continental	52	51	65
Town Car	54	52	43
Mark VII	62	56	64
Total Lincoln	**54**	**52**	**50**
Total L-M Div.	**64**	**54**	**50**
FORD MOTOR CO.	**67**	**59**	**55**
Skyhawk	—	—	60
Somerset/Skylark	58	41	79
Century	88	80	74
Regal	91	70	67
LeSabre	71	65	37
Reatta	146	97	87
Electra/Park Ave.	67	57	67
Riviera	72	67	54
Total Buick	**79**	**65**	**60**
Allante	118	60	84
Seville	94	26	84
DeVille	68	65	60
Brougham	128	69	91
Eldorado	77	61	64
Total Cadillac	**77**	**71**	**66**
Geo Prizm/Nova	48	39	137
Cavalier	68	56	59
Camaro	55	39	60
Celebrity	27	35	45
Corsica/Beretta	72	49	78
Lumina/Monte Carlo	62	53	84
Caprice	96	67	54
Corvette	61	45	47
Total Chevrolet	**63**	**49**	**71**
Calais	91	43	66
Cutlass Ciera	75	81	58
Cutlass Supreme	115	125	102
88	77	64	40
98	96	62	52
Toronado	94	44	92
Total Oldsmobile	**89**	**78**	**61**
Sunbird	61	46	54
Firebird	84	72	53
Grand Am	54	30	69
Pontiac 6000	85	119	71
Grand Prix	75	75	99
Bonneville H	111	105	75
Safari/Parisienne	—	—	50
Total Pontiac	**71**	**58**	**71**
GENERAL MOTORS	**72**	**58**	**67**
HONDA	**22**	**29**	**29**
MAZDA	**39**	**45**	**58**
MITSUBISHI	**72**	**66**	**37**
NISSAN	**56**	**79**	**91**
TOYOTA*	**34**	**52**	**25**
SUBARU	**115**	**112**	**8**
DOMESTIC TOTAL	**64**	**56**	**57**
Subcompact	**40**	**44**	**39**
Compact	**65**	**58**	**54**
Intermediate	**75**	**61**	**69**
Standard	**78**	**68**	**47**
Specialty	**66**	**58**	**66**
*Estimate			

Thunderbird fights battle of bulges

By Laura Clark
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

DEARBORN, Mich. — When the redesigned Thunderbird and Cougar arrived in dealer showrooms in December 1988, the cars were overweight and over budget.

The situation became widely known inside Ford Motor Co. when engineers were chastised by top management for missing their targets on the cars.

Nearly two years later, Ford has reduced the weight of Thunderbird and Cougar by 60 pounds and has achieved 70 percent of the cost reduction goal, according to James Kennedy, manager of mid-sized specialty car development engineering. Those reductions have been made using lighter and less expensive parts or materials on the two cars.

For instance, the German-made rubber bushings, which cost about $10 apiece on the Thunderbird and Cougar, have been replaced with rate-plate bushings that cost $2.50 to $3 apiece. Ford uses two rubber bushings and four rate-plate bushings on the 1991 cars. The same technique was applied to the stabilizer-bar bushings.

"The idea was to get something that was better, not depreciated, and try to get the cost down," said Kennedy.

Kennedy said Ford wants to get the cost of the Thunderbird/Cougar down to its original (1988) cost target by 1994 and it is ahead of schedule in meeting that goal.

Ford engineers have been able to reduce the cars' weight 18 pounds by using lighter noise dampening/deadening materials. Kennedy also said that Ford saved six pounds by using a rear suspension arm made of a lighter material.

While Ford engineers have removed 60 pounds from Thunderbird and Cougar, it has added features, like a 5.0-liter High Output V-8 engine, which added 20 pounds. The V-8 is optional in Thunderbird base and LX models and standard in Cougar XR7.

The curb weight of the 1991 Thunderbird is 3,550 pounds with the V-6, down 31 pounds from 1990.

Kennedy said Ford could take out "250 pounds if we wanted to," but the procedure would cost a substantial amount of money. For instance, Ford has contemplated using aluminum instead of steel rear suspension arms to further reduce the weight, but the part would be too costly.

"The car is in a sensitive price class; a lot of these actions would make the car cost more," said Kennedy, who has worked on the Thunderbird/Cougar since 1978.

Kennedy said that there was resistance to Thunderbird and Cougar price tags when the redesigned versions were introduced in December 1988. But sales improved when Ford added a $1,500 rebate — and faltered when that rebate was reduced to $1,000.

He added that the real customer value of reducing weight has not been determined. "It's not crystal clear that if you take this much weight out of the car it's going to be beneficial; the customer doesn't weigh his car and say 'Oh, I've got a heavy car,' " he said.

Ford would have to reduce the weight of the Thunderbird and Cougar a minimum of 125 pounds before it changes "inertia class," that is, the EPA weight class that is figured into the car's corporate average fuel economy, Kennedy said.

He predicted that the weight of the cars will not change dramatically over the next couple years. While engineers will continue to find ways to reduce weight, added features put on the car in response to customer demand or government regulations will negate any weight reduction measures.

"The other part of it is a lot of the changes that we see coming in later models, like 1993 and 1994. There are emissions requirements, there are crash requirements — we're going to end up adding air bags to all our cars," he said.

"All those things, like evaporative emissions, are going to add weight. What we're doing is to offset all those weight increases so the car does not get heavier. I don't expect a dramatic weight change in the future years," he said.

Orbital parent says profits doubled in '89

By Padr Davis
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

SYDNEY, Australia — Sarich Technologies Ltd., the parent of Orbital Engine Company Pty Ltd., has more than doubled last year's pre-tax profit with a figure of $19 million (U.S.).

Chairman and chief executive Ralph Sarich predicted that profits should double next year with the business already in hand.

Sarich Technologes derives most of its income from licensing its Orbital Combustion Process, according to the company.

Sarich Technologies also announced that a number of senior executives will move from Perth, Western Australia, to the United States.

Sarich named his deputy, Ken Johnsen, to head Sarich Technology's U.S. subsidiary, Orbital USA.

Based in Tecumseh, Mich., Orbital USA was established last year with the backing of the Michigan state government to mass-produce engines incorporating Orbital technology.

The production validation program for the 1.2-liter, two-stroke unit has proved faster and is more straight-forward than similar programs for conventional four-stroke engines, said a company spokesman.

Johnsen will be responsible for guiding Orbital USA to its 1992 and 1993 production schedules and for paving the way for a U.S. stock exchange listing for Sarich Technologies.

Two other senior U.S. executives were named. William J. Kaska takes on the position of Orbital USA president, and James Cunningham has been appointed general manager.

FORD

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said he sold about 250 Metropolitans in 1989. "The vehicle has been fairly popular with dealers, but the market is going to be eliminated (for Magnum) if Ford does the same thing," said Dinsmore.

Insiders say Ford plans to use a similar concept to build its own full-sized sport-utility wagon. By using an existing chassis and parts from the F-series and Bronco, the project can be less expensive than an entire new vehicle, which could cost as much as $2 billion. No cost estimates on the proposed truck were available last week. Both the Bronco and the F-series will undergo minor facelifts in the 1992 model year.

The new full-sized sport-utility wagon may also help fill the niche left when Ford vacates the full-sized car wagon market next spring. Ford is dropping wagon versions of the Ford Crown Victoria and Grand Marquis.

One company source said Ford plans to build about 40,000 full-sized sport-utility wagons annually. Ford's Dearborn, Mich., assembly plant has been mentioned as a possible production site, although an official from UAW Local 600, which represents Dearborn assembly workers, said Ford has not discussed the project with the union.

Chevrolet and GMC combined sold 89,079 Suburbans in 1989, down from 89,641 in 1988. Based on combined sales, it was the fourth best-selling sport-utility in 1989.

SALES

FROM PAGE 2

from its Pontiac, Buick and Chevrolet divisions, but Oldsmobile and Cadillac were down from sales in the year-ago period.

Sales of the Geo Prizm slid for the second consecutive 10-day period — but for only the third 10-day period this year. Prizm sales totaled 1,580, off 26.31 percent from the year-ago period. Corvette sales plummeted 79.08 percent and sales of the new Caprice were off 28.20 percent.

Buick Regal sales climbed 48.70 percent.

One of GM's brightest notes came from Pontiac, where Sunbird sales skyrocketed 181.43 percent. Sales of the Grand Am rose 34.84 percent.

Chrysler suffered declines in both its car and truck sales for an overall decline of 16.39 percent. Chrysler's stable of Eagle and Chrysler cars reported increased sales, but Dodge and Plymouth were down — Plymouth was off 44.22 percent and Dodge was down 5.75 percent.

Among transplants, Nissan came out blazing with a 150.07 percent increase in car sales and a 175.25 percent hike in truck sales for a combined vehicle sales hike of 164.15 percent.

Honda's sales rose 89.10 percent; Mazda was up 82.91 percent; and Toyota soared 70.94 percent.

Mitsubishi was the only transplant with lower sales, down 21.74 percent.

INCENTIVE WATCH

CUSTOMER INCENTIVES

	Rebates	Finance Rates (Pct.) — Months — 24	36	48	60	Expiration Date
Chrysler Corp. (1989-90 models)						
Chrysler	$750-$2,000	2.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 30*
Dodge cars	$750-$1,500	2.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 30*
Dodge trucks	$750-$2,500	2.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 30*
Eagle	$750-$2,000	2.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 30*
Jeep	$500-$1,500	2.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 30*
Plymouth	$750-$1,500	2.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 30*

*Incentive financing of zero percent for 24 months, 4.9 percent for 48 months and 7.9 percent for 60 months applies to Chrysler LeBaron coupe, Imperial, New Yorker, New Yorker Salon, New Yorker Landau and New Yorker Fifth Avenue; Dodge Daytona and Dynasty, and Jeep Cherokee and Wagoneer Ltd. Rates of zero or 2.9 percent for 24 months (depending on model), 7.9 percent for 48 months and 10.9 percent for 60 months are available on all other models.

Chrysler Corp. (1991 models)						
Chrysler	$500	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 30
Dodge cars	$500	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 30
Dodge trucks	$500-$1,000	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 30
Eagle	$500	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 30
Jeep	$500-$1,000	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 30
Plymouth	$500	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 30
Ford Motor Co. (1990 models)						
Ford cars*	$700-$1,000	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Ford trucks	$600-$1,500	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Mercury*	$1,000	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Continental, Mark VII	$1,500-$2,000					Sept. 26
Ford Motor Co. (1991 models)						
Ford cars*	$500-$750	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Ford trucks	$500-$1,000	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Mercury*	$500-$1,000	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26

*Finance rate is 4.9 percent for 48 months on Escort and Tracer.

General Motors (1990 models)						
Buick*	$500-$1,250	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Riviera	$2,000	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Reatta	$3,000	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Geo cars	$500-$1,500	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Chevrolet cars	$500-$1,400	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Geo Tracker	$1,000	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Chevrolet trucks	$600-$1,500	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Lumina APV	$1,250	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Cadillac	$1,500-$2,000					Sept. 26
Oldsmobile*	$1,500-$2,500	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Silhouette	$1,250	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Pontiac	$750-$2,000**	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Trans Sport	$1,500**					

*Rebates on 1989 Oldsmobiles are $500 more than on 1990 models. Finance rate is 4.9 percent for 48 months on 1989-90 Cutlass Supreme and Cutlass Ciera and 1990 Buick Century and Regal.
**Dealers contribute $1,000 on Grand Prix, $500 on Trans Sport.

General Motors (1991 models)						
Buick*	$250-$1,250	3.9	5.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Chevrolet, Geo cars	$500-$1,000	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Lumina APV	$500	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Chevrolet trucks	$500-$1,000	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Geo Tracker	$500-$1,000	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Oldsmobile	$500-$1,500	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Silhouette	$500	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Pontiac	$500-$1,000	7.9	7.9	7.9	10.9	Sept. 26
Trans Sport	$500					

*Buick rebates based on option package selected. Finance rates on Regal sedan are 4.9/4.9/4.9/10.9. No rebates or special financing on Reatta and Park Avenue.

Hyundai (1990)	$500-$1,250	Oct. 2
Mazda (1990 models)		
323	$750	Oct. 2
Protege	Free air or auto. trans.	Oct. 2
626, MX-6	$1,000-$1,500	Nov. 2
MPV	$500-$750 discount on option packages	Nov. 2
Trucks	$750 plus free option package	Oct. 2
Mitsubishi (1989-90 models)		
Cars	$500-$2,000	Sept. 30
Montero	$2,000	Sept. 30
Nissan (1990 models)		
Sentra	$1,000-$1,200	Oct. 2
Trucks	$1,000	Oct. 2
Subaru		
Justy (1989-90)	$500-$1,000	Oct. 2
Loyale (1990)	$800-$1,200	Oct. 2
Suzuki (1990 models)*		
Swift	$400-$1,500	Oct. 2
Samurai	$1,000	Oct. 2
Sidekick	$1,000-$2,500**	Oct. 2
Suzuki (1991 models)*		
Sidekick	$500-$600	Oct. 2

*Customer rebate or dealer rebate; dealer's choice
**$3,000 in California

Note: Some makers offer rebates to buyers of 1988 and 1989 models. Most of those programs are omitted from this table because of the limited number of those vehicles still in dealers' hands.

INCENTIVES

FROM PAGE 2

for September sells 55 units, he gets nothing for the first 25 units sold, $250 per unit for the next 12, $750 per for the next 12 and $1,000 each for the next six.

September's sales objective can be achieved by selling cars out of the dealer's inventory.

If dealers meets purchase quotas for October, they can qualify for paybacks of $1,000 per eligible unit sold, retroactive to the first unit in the 50.1 to 75 percent pay level. Sales objectives change monthly.

The program is unusual because Chrysler recently has used dealer rebates on individual, high-inventory models, not the entire line.

Elsewhere, Mitsubishi Motor Sales of America Inc. announced both dealer and consumer rebates on cars, sport-utilities and trucks. The payments vary by regions. All regions are paying dealer rebates on 1991 trucks and vans, and one region is paying Mitsubishi's first dealer rebates on 1991 cars. The programs expire Sept. 30.

Consumer incentives range from $500 to $2,000 on 1989 and 1990 cars and sport-utilities. Dealer rebates are $250 to $2,500 on 1989 and 1990 cars and sport-utilities, and $600 to $1,000 on 1989, 1990 and 1991 light trucks, vans and wagons.

Mitsubishi will offer incentives for the first time on its 1991 cars to dealers in the Northeast. Incentives on the 1991 Galant are $300 on the base model, $500 on the LS and GS and $750 on the GSX.

Audi of America Inc. has increased the dealer rebate on its 1990 100-series cars from $1,500 to $3,000 and extended the program through Dec. 31.

INCENTIVE WATCH

DEALER INCENTIVES

	Rebate	Expiration Date
Chrysler Corp. (1989-90 models)		
Monaco (1990 model)	$2,500	Sept. 30
Premier (1989-90 base models)	$2,500	Sept. 30
Cherokee Ltd., Wagoneer Ltd., Grand Wagoneer (1989-90 models)	$500-$4,000	Sept. 30
Chyrsler Corp. (1989-90-91 models)		
All cars and trucks	$250-$1,000, quota	Dec. 31
Ford Motor Co. (1990 models)		
Taurus SHO	$2,000	Sept. 26
Topaz, Sable, Cougar	$300-$1,500, quota (only in New York, New Jersey, New England)	Sept. 26
Crown Victoria	$300	Sept. 26
Town Car	$1,500-$2,500 based on number sold	Sept. 26
Continental Mark VII	$1,000-$2,000 based on number sold	Sept. 26
General Motors (1990 models)		
Cadillac	$500-$1,250, quota	Sept. 26
Audi (1990 models)		
100 Series	$3,000	Dec. 31
Hyundai (1989-90 models)		
Excel	$200-$500, quota	Oct. 2
Sonata	$350	Oct. 2
Isuzu (1990 models)		
Pickup, Trooper	$700-$1,200, based on number sold	Sept. 30
Mitsubishi (1989-90 models)*		
Cars	$250-$2,250, based on number sold	Sept. 30
Trucks (include '91 models)	$600-$1,000, based on number sold	Sept. 30
Montero	$250	Sept. 30

*Payments vary by regions

Mitsubishi (1991 models)		
Galant**	$300-$750, based on number sold	Sept. 30

**Northeast region only

Nissan		
Stanza (1990 models)	$100-$1,000, based on number sold	Oct. 2
Trucks (1990-91 models)	$100-$200, based on number sold	Nov. 2
Peugeot (1989 models)		
405	$2,500-$3,500	None
Subaru (1990 models)		
Legacy	$1,500-$2,500	Oct. 2
Suzuki (1990 models)*		
Swift	$400-$1,500	Oct. 2
Samurai	$1,000	Oct. 2
Sidekick	$1,000-$2,500**	Oct. 2
Suzuki (1991 models)*		
Sidekick	$500-$600	Oct. 2

*Customer rebate or dealer rebate; dealer's choice
**$3,000 in California

Toyota (1989-1990 models)		
Tercel, Camry, Corolla	$200-$1,200, quota	Nov. 2
Toyota (1991 models)		
Corolla, Camry	$200-$1,000, quota	Nov. 2
Volkswagen (1990 models)		
Golf	$500	Dec. 31
Fox	$500	Sept. 30
Corrado	$1,500	None
Volvo (1989-90 models)	$200-$600, based on number sold	Sept. 30

Note: Some makers offer rebates to dealers on sales of 1989 and 1990 models. Most of those programs are omitted from this table because of the limited number of those vehicles still in dealers' hands.

RENTALS

FROM PAGE 1

tracts cover rental cars, and I intend to take full advantage of that," said Chris Exposito, general manager of New Union Chevrolet in Kansas City, Mo. New Union was one of the dealerships in the pilot program.

Some vehicles may have to be rented five days a week for a dealership to break even on the rental program, let alone make money, said one dealer who did not want to be identified.

But not all dealers agreed.

"It has helped build our rental car income . . . 20 to 30 percent," Exposito said.

The best advantage of the rental program may be realized in the used-car department, said Dan Ladd, owner of Courtesy Chevrolet of Kansas City, Mo.

"We're going to own a car for the average price coming out of auction, and we're going to know the car and how it was serviced," he said.

"They're also going to be equipped the way we want and be the colors we want."

Not all dealers are rushing to sign up, though.

"I elected not to go on it," said Pat Duckers, sales manager at Jay Wolfe Chevrolet in Kansas City, Mo.

"We have trouble watching four rental cars, let alone 15 or 20. We're going to wait six months and then decide whether to get in," Duckers said.

Another dealer who isn't interested is Gordon Stewart, owner of two Chevrolet dealerships in the Detroit area.

He said he would rather sell cars and not get involved with rentals.

"It's a terrible business to be in," he said.

"And if you have a good rental operation and a bad used-car department, you'd kill yourself," he added.

Honda Power Equipment shifts to Georgia site

DULUTH, Ga. — Honda Power Equipment, a division of American Honda Motor Co. Inc. and producer of lawn mowers, has relocated its national administrative headquarters here from Gardena, Calif.

Steve Bailey, senior manager of sales operations, said the reason for choosing Georgia was its locale, which he said is near Honda's research and development facility in Ohio as well as Honda Power Equipment Manufacturing in North Carolina.

The sales and marketing, service, dealer development, training, engineering support, product planning and customer relations operations are all housed in the headquarters.

OBITUARIES

Thomas J. Ferguson Jr.

BROCKTON, Mass. — Thomas J. Ferguson Jr., a former regional manager for Chrysler Corp., died Aug. 22. He was 69.

Preston Kearsley

SALT LAKE CITY — Preston Kearsley, president of the Utah Automobile Dealers Association for the past 10 years, died Aug. 8. He was 52.

OUTPUT, MODEL YEAR 1990 vs. 1989

U.S. CAR	1990 Model Year	Pct. of Output	1989 Model Year	Pct. of Output	Pct. Change '89 vs. '88
Horizon	16,397	0.27	45,341	0.64	– 63.84
Sundance	79,562	1.31	104,150	1.47	– 23.61
Reliant	0	0.00	36,012	0.51	– 100.00
Acclaim	110,330	1.82	77,752	1.10	41.90
Caravelle	0	0.00	202	0.00	– 100.00
Gran Fury	0	0.00	4,985	0.07	– 100.00
Total Plymouth	**206,289**	**3.40**	**268,442**	**3.80**	**– 23.15**
LeBaron A	8,074	0.13	0	0.00	—
LeBaron J	65,220	1.08	99,633	1.41	– 34.54
LeBaron GTS	0	0.00	6,549	0.09	– 100.00
N. Yorker C-Class	41,581	0.69	100,461	1.42	– 58.61
Fifth Avenue	44,423	0.73	17,454	0.25	154.51
Imperial	14,968	0.25	0	0.00	—
Total Chrysler	**174,266**	**2.88**	**224,097**	**3.17**	**– 22.24**
Omni	16,733	0.28	46,239	0.65	– 63.81
Daytona	43,785	0.72	80,878	1.14	– 45.86
Shadow	93,660	1.55	99,743	1.41	– 6.10
Aries	0	0.00	36,932	0.52	– 100.00
Dynasty	112,833	1.86	137,718	1.95	– 18.07
Lancer	0	0.00	5,019	0.07	– 100.00
Spirit	99,319	1.64	68,181	0.96	45.67
Diplomat	0	0.00	6,429	0.09	– 100.00
Total Dodge	**366,330**	**6.04**	**481,139**	**6.81**	**– 23.86**
CHRYSLER MOTORS	**746,885**	**12.32**	**973,678**	**13.78**	**– 23.29**
Escort	196,310	3.24	363,122	5.14	– 45.94
Mustang	128,189	2.12	209,769	2.97	– 38.89
Tempo	141,009	2.33	151,934	2.15	– 7.19
Taurus	333,001	5.49	395,261	5.59	– 15.75
Thunderbird	113,957	1.88	114,868	1.63	– 0.79
Total Ford Div.	**912,466**	**15.06**	**1,234,954**	**17.47**	**– 26.11**
Topaz	57,368	0.95	66,930	0.95	– 14.29
Cougar	81,420	1.34	97,312	1.38	– 16.33
Sable	103,749	1.71	130,657	1.85	– 20.59
Total Mercury	**242,537**	**4.00**	**294,899**	**4.17**	**– 17.76**
Continental	64,257	1.06	57,775	0.82	11.22
Mark VII	22,313	0.37	29,658	0.42	– 24.77
Town Car	147,160	2.43	128,533	1.82	14.49
Total Lincoln	**233,730**	**3.86**	**215,966**	**3.06**	**8.23**
Total L-M Div.	**476,267**	**7.86**	**510,865**	**7.23**	**– 6.77**
FORD MOTOR CO.	**1,388,733**	**22.92**	**1,745,819**	**24.70**	**– 20.45**
Skyhawk	0	0.00	23,359	0.33	– 100.00
Skylark/Somerset	85,568	1.41	61,540	0.87	39.04
Century	89,384	1.47	152,809	2.16	– 41.51
Riviera	22,526	0.37	21,189	0.30	6.31
Electra	49,139	0.81	83,566	1.18	– 41.20
LeSabre (fwd)	163,381	2.70	149,572	2.12	9.23
LeSabre (rwd)	7,999	0.13	7,743	0.11	3.31
Reatta	8,515	0.14	7,009	0.10	21.49
Total Buick	**426,512**	**7.04**	**506,787**	**7.17**	**– 15.84**
Eldorado	22,291	0.37	30,925	0.44	– 27.92
Seville	33,128	0.55	22,909	0.32	44.61
Brougham (rwd)	33,741	0.56	40,260	0.57	– 16.19
DeVille (fwd)	176,589	2.91	178,938	2.53	– 1.31
Allante	3,101	0.05	3,298	0.05	– 5.97
Total Cadillac	**268,850**	**4.44**	**276,330**	**3.91**	**– 2.71**
Cavalier	310,951	5.13	376,626	5.33	– 17.44
Camaro	34,986	0.58	110,739	1.57	– 68.41
Celebrity	0	0.00	153,268	2.17	– 100.00
Corsica/Beretta	306,807	5.06	411,409	5.82	– 25.43
Caprice	109,528	1.81	197,044	2 79	– 44.41
Corvette	23,646	0.39	26,412	0.37	– 10.47
Total Chevrolet	**785,918**	**12.97**	**1,275,498**	**18.05**	**– 38.38**
Calais	90,715	1.50	109,891	1.55	– 17.45
Cutlass Ciera	81,342	1.34	79,953	1.13	1.74
Cutlass Supreme	119,305	1.97	100,026	1.42	19.27
Toronado	15,022	0.25	9,877	0.14	52.09
88 (fwd)	116,823	1.93	152,039	2.15	– 23.16
88 (rwd)	3,890	0.06	8,929	0.13	– 56.43
98	62,395	1.03	73,103	1.03	– 14.65
Total Oldsmobile	**489,492**	**8.08**	**533,818**	**7.55**	**– 8.30**
Sunbird	143,932	2.38	139,644	1.98	3.07
Grand Am	197,020	3.25	246,418	3.49	– 20.05
Firebird	20,553	0.34	64,406	0.91	– 68.09
Grand Prix	128,073	2.11	136,747	1.93	– 6.34
Pontiac 6000	66,398	1.10	100,586	1.42	– 33.99
Bonneville	85,844	1.42	108,653	1.54	– 20.99
Safari/Parisienne	0	0.00	5,146	0.07	– 100.00
Total Pontiac	**641,820**	**10.59**	**801,600**	**11.34**	**– 19.93**
GENERAL MOTORS	**2,612,592**	**43.11**	**3,394,033**	**48.02**	**– 23.02**
DIAMOND-STAR	**162,775**	**2.69**	**0**	**0.00**	**—**
HONDA*	**400,802**	**6.61**	**347,432**	**4.92**	**15.36**
Civic	127,190	2.10	116,113	1.64	9.54
Accord	273,612	4.51	231,319	3.27	18.28
MAZDA	**232,382**	**3.83**	**228,756**	**3.24**	**1.59**
NISSAN	**98,674**	**1.63**	**116,644**	**1.65**	**– 15.41**
NUMMI	**194,270**	**3.21**	**153,080**	**2.17**	**26.91**
Corolla	94,580	1.56	69,950	0.99	35.21
Geo Prizm/Nova	99,690	1.64	83,130	1.18	19.92
SUBARU-ISUZU	**11,849**	**0.20**	**0**	**0.00**	**—**
TOYOTA	**211,265**	**3.49**	**108,185**	**1.53**	**95.28**
TOTAL CARS, U.S.	**6,060,227**		**7,067,827**		**– 14.25**
TOTAL CARS U.S., CANADA	**7,046,084**		**7,941,090**		**– 11.27**

*Model year through Aug. 31, 1990

CANADIAN CAR	1990 Model Year	Pct. of Output	1989 Model Year	Pct. of Output	Pct. Change '89 vs. '88
Monaco	7,154	0.73	0	0.00	—
Premier	15,077	1.53	43,179	4.94	– 65.08
CHRYSLER MOTORS	**22,231**	**2.25**	**43,179**	**4.94**	**– 48.51**
Tempo	124,884	12.67	136,851	15.67	– 8.74
Topaz	49,511	5.02	61,205	7.01	– 19.11
Crown Victoria	77,395	7.85	134,103	15.35	– 42.29
Grand Marquis	74,606	7.57	138,913	15.90	– 46.29
FORD MOTOR CO.	**326,396**	**33.11**	**471,072**	**53.93**	**– 30.71**
Celebrity	31,646	3.21	22,452	2.57	40.95
Cutlass Ciera	81,228	8.24	159,636	18.28	– 49.12
Lumina	248,064	25.16	0	0.00	—
Regal	87,498	8.88	88,757	10.16	– 1.42
GENERAL MOTORS	**448,436**	**45.49**	**270,845**	**31.01**	**65.57**
HONDA	**107,144**	**10.87**	**71,520**	**8.19**	**49.81**
HYUNDAI	**22,530**	**2.29**	**0**	**0.00**	**—**
TOYOTA	**50,849**	**5.16**	**10,236**	**1.17**	**396.77**
VOLVO	**8,271**	**0.84**	**6,611**	**0.76**	**25.11**
TOTAL CARS, CANADA	**985,857**		**873,463**		**12.87**

Model-year build dips 11%

By Karen Detkowski and Anne Wright
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS DATA CENTER

North American car production for the 1990 model year plunged 11.27 percent from the 1989 model total. The 1990 model-year total barely edged past seven million, as automakers built just 7,046,084 passenger cars in the United States and Canada.

The decline was entirely attributable to U.S. factories, where the 1990-model car production total of 6,060,227 was off 14.25 percent from the 1989 model year and was the lowest model-year build since the 5,768,893-car total in the 1983 model year.

The U.S. 1990-model car total suffered as sales slumped, dealers kept leaner stocks and Chrysler Corp. closed its Jefferson Avenue plant in Detroit in February 1990.

In addition, General Motors closed its Framingham, Mass., plant at the end of the 1989 model year and its Willow Run, Mich., plant remained idle throughout the 1990 model year.

In May 1990, Ford Motor Co.'s Edison, N.J. facility, completed production of the 1990 Escort. The plant was retooled for the production of the 1991 Ford Ranger.

While production declined in the United States, Canadian car output in the 1990 model year rose 12.87 percent above the 1989 model year, barely missing the million-unit mark.

A major contributor to the increase in Canada was Toyota's Cambridge, Ontario, plant, which hiked Corolla production more than 300 percent.

Chevrolet Lumina — the car production volume leader in Canada — was not produced in the 1989 model year.

In the United States, high inventories and slow sales plagued output at the onset of 1990 model year, and automakers were forced to cut production schedules.

Signs of slow model-year production began in December when GM extended Christmas vacations at eight U.S. assembly plants.

Throughout January 1990, 24 Big 3 U.S. car assembly plants and one transplant, Mazda Motor Manufacturing USA Corp., were idled at various times due to lagging sales.

Transplants and joint ventures in the United States accounted for 21.65 of the cars produced in the model year.

The volume leader in the United States was the Ford Taurus with 333,001 units, followed by Chevrolet Cavalier, 310,951; Chevrolet Corsica/Beretta, 306,807; Honda Accord, 273,612; and Pontiac Grand Am, 197,020.

Subaru-Isuzu Automotive Inc. was the newcomer to U.S. manufacturing in the 1990 model year. The company assembled 11,849 Subaru Legacys and continues 1990 production of the Isuzu pickup until Oct. 4.

BIRMINGHAM

FROM PAGE 3

Attracting more attention will be the £48,000 (approximately $26,000) Lotus Carlton; the first of the 180 mph saloons will be delivered before the end of 1990. Lotus has upgraded the Esprit range by dropping the non-turbo model; GM-sourced ABS is now standard.

Rover is on a roll with its latest products and will debut the sporting three-door 200 models. The range will extend from a low powered entry-level model up to the 130 horsepower 16-valve Honda twin-cam flagship. Rover's star model may well be the snappy revived Mini Cooper. For the executive Rover 800 model, there is at last a turbo diesel derivative.

The five-door Land Rover Discovery makes it show debut with the limited-edition Range Rover CSK.

The lethargic Jaguar 2.9-liter engined XJ6 was never sold in the United States, but that may change with the launch of its 24-valve 3.2-liter successor. For the first time, Jaguar has tauter sports pack suspension available for XJ6. From another Ford property, Aston Martin, there will be the premiere of the Virage Volante convertible.

Not surprisingly, the show will preview the new United Kingdom-built Nissan Primera, which has already made its U.S. debut as the Infiniti G20. Dramatically more stylish than its Bluebird predecessor, the Primera has an 80 percent European Community content.

Launched earlier this month is the new Volvo 940/960, powered by the all-new Porsche-designed six-cylinder engine. The 24-valve, aluminum engine produces 204 horsepower; there is also a new turbo diesel. The new model replaces the 760 and several 740 derivatives and is similar except for a more rounded rear window and standard rear independent suspension.

Volkswagen has chosen one of the Polo's top export markets to launch a long overdue facelifted version. The updated styling is smoother and the interior is all new. VW has beaten the opposition by fitting all Polos with fuel injection and catalytic converters as standard. Birmingham also will mark the first look at the all-new VW Caravelle (Vanagon), which is sleeker and has front-wheel drive.

The Skoda Favorit station wagon also will debut.

PORSCHE

FROM PAGE 3

during the fiscal year that ended July 31, compared with 7,510 944s and 2,786 928s.

Two years earlier, Porsche produced 13,463 911s, 14,166 924/944s and 4,096 928s. But Porsche officials were anxious last week to downplay talk about the end of the line for the 944 and 928 models. "We will still live with these products for many years," said one company official.

The redesigned 944, dubbed the 968 inside the company, will debut at next year's Frankfurt show and feature front- and rear-end changes that bring the car visually closer to the 928. The car will have interior improvements and more output from the 3.0-liter, 4-cylinder engine.

The 928 will be freshened one or two years later. But the new long-term strategy marks a fundamental change for the West German sports car maker and, potentially, a risky one. Indeed, Porsche insiders are nervous about comments in the press that it will build a "sedan," and they cringe at the term "four-seater."

An internal Porsche memo issued last week stressed that the car should be referred to as "a Porsche for more than two."

The memo made several points: Porsche does not need a second 911 model, but it does need a four-place sports car; the 911 will remain the backbone of the line and undergo further development; the 944 remains a critical part of the range that will receive significant investment; and "possibilities are not yet used up" for the 928.

The car will be fitted with the new narrow-angle V-8 engine that also may replace the air-cooled flat six in the rear-engine 911 if it can be made sufficiently compact. The new powerplant would displace 3.5 to 4 liters, receive four-valve technology and develop up to 400 horsepower.

An insider said the new car is conceived with a short snout, large cabin and sports car shape.

PRICES

FROM PAGE 2

Ford Motor's 1991 increases over final 1990 prices range from $25-$26 on the Mercury Sable LS sedan and wagon to $1,572 on the Lincoln Town Car Signature model.

Some lines — like Mercury Sable and Ford Taurus — which received big pre-introduction price hikes, wound up with more moderate boosts in the second round.

Others — like Ford Escort and Mustang and Mercury Tracer — received bigger increases the second time.

The planned price hikes on Ford Tempo and Mercury Topaz were rescinded; those 1991 models are priced the same as at the end of the 1990 model year. They had been scheduled to rise $363 to $404.

The base Mercury Cougar, down $248, is the only Ford Motor car to show a year-to-year price cut.

Ford Thunderbirds are up $277 to $548, considerably less than the original boost of $742 to $875.

The Australian-built Mercury Capri convertibles, which were introduced in July and were not included in the pre-intro hikes, went up $398 and $402 in the second pricing exercise.

Ford Crown Victoria and Mercury Grand Marquis sedans retained their $542 to $555 price hikes, but similar boosts on the wagons in those lines were rescinded.

PRODUCTION

7-millionth trails 1989 by a month

By Anne E. Wright
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS CHIEF STATISTICIAN

U.S. car and truck producers assembled their seven-millionth vehicle last Tuesday, Sept. 11. Last year, the seven-millionth vehicle was produced Aug. 15.

Year-to-date, U.S. car and truck production is 7,169,586, 9.71 percent below the year-ago mark of 7,940,929. This year's total comprises 4,332,987 cars and 2,836,599 trucks.

Last week, U.S. automakers scheduled output of 136,978 cars, 22.30 percent above the previous week and 3.18 percent behind the year-ago week.

Truckmakers assembled 79,043 units last week, 15.94 percent above the prior week and 10.49 above the same week in 1989.

Companies split last week's targeted car production as follows: General Motors, 47.53 percent; Ford Motor Co., 19.04 percent; Chrysler Corp., 12.99 percent; Honda of America Manufacturing Inc., 6.22 percent; Toyota Motor Manufacturing U.S.A. Inc., 3.20 percent; Diamond-Star Motors Corp., 3.02 percent; Mazda Motor Manufacturing (USA) Corp., 3.00 percent; New United Motor Manufacturing Inc., 2.92 percent; Nissan Motor Manufacturing Corp. U.S.A., 1.37 percent; Subaru-Isuzu Automotive Inc., 0.60 percent; and Saturn Corp., 0.11 percent.

Ford scheduled Saturday overtime at the Wayne, Mich., assembly plant.

The company also idled the Atlanta car facility and the Lorain, Ohio, truck plant last week due to a shortage of dealer orders.

Production of the Mazda Navajo, the two-door version of the Ford Explorer, began at Ford's Louisville, Ky., truck plant. That facility also produces the two-door and four-door Explorer.

GM scheduled Saturday overtime at the Bowling Green, Ky., plant and Friday overtime at the Janesville, Wis., plant last week. Bowling Green makes Corvettes; Janesville makes Cavaliers.

The Allante line at GM's Detroit-Hamtramck, Mich., plant was idle last week because of a shortage of dealer orders. It is expected to resume production today.

Chrysler scheduled two overtime shifts last Saturday at the Warren, Mich., truck plant.

Cars, trucks gain in Canada

Canadian car production last week was scheduled at 21,880 units, 5.60 percent above the prior week and 11.29 percent above the year-ago week.

So far this year, Canadian automakers have assembled 754,714 cars, 11.09 percent above the 1989 figure.

Truckmakers were scheduled to assemble 17,455 vehicles last week, 28.44 percent above the prior week but 13.91 percent below the same week last year.

Year-to-date, 611,178 trucks have been assembled, 9.00 percent below 1989.

U.S. CAR	Week Ended Sept. 15, 1990	Week Ended Sept. 16, 1989	Week Ended Sept. 8, 1990	Sept. to Date	Jan. 1 to Sept. 15, 1990	Jan. 1 to Sept. 16, 1989
Horizon	0	153	0	0	4,327	21,275
Sundance	2,300	1,996	1,812	4,112	59,538	74,059
Acclaim	3,000	3,215	2,982	5,982	75,852	89,753
Total Plymouth	**5,300**	**5,364**	**4,794**	**10,094**	**139,717**	**185,087**
LeBaron A	0	0	0	0	8,064	0
LeBaron J	1,400	2,764	1,136	2,536	36,729	74,630
LeBaron GTS	0	0	0	0	0	2,946
N. Yorker C-Class	650	979	422	1,072	28,364	62,762
Fifth Avenue	1,200	2,003	858	2,058	22,916	10,426
Imperial	150	0	174	324	12,911	0
Total Chrysler	**3,400**	**5,746**	**2,590**	**5,990**	**108,984**	**150,764**
Omni	0	164	0	0	4,078	22,329
Daytona	900	1,826	734	1,634	24,454	59,417
Shadow	2,400	2,034	1,885	4,285	67,213	71,171
Dynasty	3,100	2,384	2,004	5,104	81,463	95,887
Lancer	0	0	0	0	0	1,528
Spirit	2,700	3,475	2,601	5,301	69,098	75,070
Total Dodge	**9,100**	**9,883**	**7,224**	**16,324**	**246,306**	**325,402**
CHRYSLER MOTORS	**17,800**	**20,993**	**14,608**	**32,408**	**495,007**	**661,253**
Escort	7,904	8,497	4,988	12,892	161,684	234,867
Mustang	3,074	0	0	3,074	91,801	146,750
Tempo	0	2,957	2,517	2,517	92,434	106,524
Taurus	4,282	6,691	6,261	10,543	248,709	253,646
Thunderbird	3,356	3,129	2,716	6,072	84,488	109,274
Total Ford Div.	**18,616**	**21,274**	**16,482**	**35,098**	**679,116**	**851,061**
Topaz	0	1,424	828	828	35,215	49,724
Cougar	2,269	2,293	1,781	4,050	56,141	94,095
Sable	928	2,970	2,123	3,051	75,679	82,451
Total Mercury	**3,197**	**6,687**	**4,732**	**7,929**	**167,035**	**226,270**
Continental	1,208	992	1,052	2,260	42,760	45,226
Mark VII	214	326	186	400	15,248	14,587
Town Car	2,843	1,982	2,474	5,317	108,443	85,576
Total Lincoln	**4,265**	**3,300**	**3,712**	**7,977**	**166,451**	**145,389**
Total L-M Div.	**7,462**	**9,987**	**8,444**	**15,906**	**333,486**	**371,659**
FORD MOTOR CO.	**26,078**	**31,261**	**24,926**	**51,004**	**1,012,602**	**1,222,720**
Skyhawk	0	0	0	0	0	6,913
Skylark/Somerset	1,940	1,756	1,598	3,538	64,176	42,539
Century	2,028	2,796	1,650	3,678	46,856	92,839
Riviera	621	337	354	975	15,824	13,535
Electra/Park Ave.	3,040	2,014	2,226	5,266	34,349	56,396
LeSabre (fwd)	3,552	3,202	2,867	6,419	115,007	107,505
LeSabre (rwd)	0	204	0	0	4,022	4,962
Reatta	0	211	0	0	5,277	4,020
Total Buick	**11,181**	**10,520**	**8,695**	**19,876**	**285,511**	**328,709**
Eldorado	631	415	365	996	15,052	21,173
Seville	627	275	370	997	25,609	15,556
Brougham (rwd)	1,058	1,586	745	1,803	21,269	26,654
DeVille (fwd)	3,586	3,840	2,978	6,564	112,933	141,421
Allante	0	75	17	17	3,067	2,452
Total Cadillac	**5,902**	**6,191**	**4,475**	**10,377**	**177,930**	**206,956**
Cavalier	9,572	6,395	7,326	16,898	235,828	254,029
Camaro	2,168	2,143	1,779	3,947	52,520	72,186
Celebrity	0	0	0	0	0	70,349
Corsica/Beretta	6,160	8,980	4,977	11,137	203,002	272,550
Caprice	3,428	3,064	4,594	8,022	169,094	130,781
Corvette	633	504	377	1,010	16,251	18,104
Total Chevrolet	**21,961**	**21,086**	**19,053**	**41,014**	**676,695**	**817,999**
Calais	2,140	1,914	1,712	3,852	72,829	64,789
Cutlass Ciera	1,498	1,399	1,178	2,676	52,548	63,553
Cutlass Supreme	2,575	3,985	1,916	4,491	65,518	70,289
Toronado	369	345	222	591	11,182	5,803
88 (fwd)	2,507	2,917	1,722	4,229	74,148	95,569
88 (rwd)	0	190	0	0	1,214	5,753
98	286	1,362	106	392	33,343	51,825
Total Oldsmobile	**9,375**	**12,112**	**6,856**	**16,231**	**310,782**	**357,581**
Sunbird	4,000	2,716	2,822	6,822	111,193	101,716
Grand Am	4,800	4,744	3,848	8,648	148,208	171,451
Firebird	1,083	1,248	771	1,854	30,958	40,164
Grand Prix	3,605	3,913	2,689	6,294	84,578	91,481
Pontiac 6000	1,445	1,591	1,219	2,664	39,998	59,234
Bonneville	1,756	2,207	1,092	2,848	55,737	66,688
Safari/Parisienne	0	0	0	0	0	2,691
Total Pontiac	**16,689**	**16,419**	**12,441**	**29,130**	**470,672**	**533,425**
GENERAL MOTORS	**65,108**	**66,328**	**51,520**	**116,628**	**1,921,590**	**2,244,670**
DIAMOND-STAR	**4,133**	**2,314**	**2,999**	**7,132**	**94,997**	**49,556**
HONDA	**8,520**	**6,409**	**7,186**	**15,706**	**310,038**	**265,634**
Civic	1,350	2,844	1,021	2,371	80,316	92,690
Accord	7,170	3,565	6,165	13,335	229,722	172,944
MAZDA†	**4,104**	**4,420**	**2,897**	**7,001**	**124,157**	**144,253**
NISSAN	**1,870**	**2,602**	**1,311**	**3,181**	**57,982**	**84,126**
NUMMI	**4,000**	**3,364**	**2,366**	**6,366**	**141,616**	**142,270**
Corolla	2,000	1,330	1,167	3,167	71,272	57,607
Geo Prizm/Nova	2,000	2,034	1,199	3,199	70,344	84,663
SATURN*	**150**	**0**	**125**	**275**	**775**	**0**
SUBARU-ISUZU	**825**	**0**	**615**	**1,440**	**19,943**	**0**
TOYOTA	**4,390**	**3,792**	**3,445**	**7,835**	**154,280**	**96,365**
TOTAL CARS, U.S.	**136,978**	**141,483**	**111,998**	**248,976**	**4,332,987**	**4,910,847**
TOTAL CARS, CANADA	**21,880**	**19,661**	**20,720**	**42,600**	**754,714**	**679,379**
U.S., CANADA CARS	**158,858**	**161,144**	**132,718**	**291,576**	**5,087,701**	**5,590,226**
U.S., CANADA CARS AND TRUCKS	**255,356**	**252,958**	**214,482**	**469,838**	**8,535,478**	**9,291,966**

Monthly estimates may contain error of one or two units due to rounding.
†Total includes MX-6, 626, and Ford Probe
*Estimated

CANADIAN CAR	Week Ended Sept. 15, 1990	Week Ended Sept. 16, 1989	Week Ended Sept. 8, 1990	Sept. to Date	Jan. 1 to Sept. 15, 1990	Jan. 1 to Sept. 16, 1989
Monaco	1,120	0	933	2,053	8,944	0
Premier	155	0	78	233	7,710	25,966
CHRYSLER MOTORS	**1,275**	**0**	**1,011**	**2,286**	**16,654**	**25,966**
Tempo	0	3,046	2,495	2,495	82,981	93,770
Topaz	0	1,283	1,076	1,076	31,197	39,874
Crown Victoria	3,247	2,089	2,134	5,381	87,307	84,632
Grand Marquis	2,516	2,430	2,304	4,820	79,673	91,057
FORD MOTOR CO.	**5,763**	**8,848**	**8,009**	**13,772**	**281,158**	**309,333**
Celebrity	0	325	0	0	20,319	15,744
Cutlass Ciera	1,635	557	500	2,135	55,622	97,000
Lumina	6,562	4,672	4,751	11,313	153,479	103,256
Regal	1,530	2,931	2,429	3,959	66,809	53,460
GENERAL MOTORS	**9,727**	**8,485**	**7,680**	**17,407**	**296,229**	**269,460**
CAMI*	**850**	**0**	**850**	**1,700**	**24,650**	**0**
HONDA	**2,150**	**1,723**	**1,631**	**3,781**	**73,664**	**58,968**
HYUNDAI	**825**	**0**	**653**	**1,478**	**14,698**	**0**
TOYOTA	**1,200**	**437**	**792**	**1,992**	**41,864**	**18,086**
VOLVO	**90**	**168**	**94**	**184**	**5,797**	**5,566**
TOTAL CARS, CANADA	**21,880**	**19,661**	**20,720**	**42,600**	**754,714**	**679,379**

U.S. TRUCK	Week Ended Sept. 15, 1990	Week Ended Sept. 16, 1989	Week Ended Sept. 8, 1990	Sept. to Date	Jan. 1 to Sept. 15, 1990	Jan. 1 to Sept. 16, 1989
Caravan	400	2,569	183	583	67,645	74,660
Dakota	1,700	2,198	1,600	3,300	49,561	69,381
Caravan C/V	0	111	0	0	4,171	5,046
Ram pickups	2,600	2,208	2,389	4,989	73,540	69,540
Total Dodge	**4,700**	**7,086**	**4,172**	**8,872**	**194,917**	**218,627**
Cherokee	3,900	4,403	3,142	7,042	110,793	158,326
Comanche	300	480	266	566	5,871	20,878
Grand Wagoneer	300	0	0	300	4,972	7,774
Wagoneer	100	134	96	196	2,734	5,757
Total Jeep	**4,600**	**5,017**	**3,504**	**8,104**	**124,370**	**192,735**
Voyager	300	2,258	133	433	63,268	69,880
Town & Country	0	210	0	0	2,078	2,654
Total C-P Div.	**300**	**2,468**	**133**	**433**	**65,346**	**72,534**
CHRYSLER MOTORS	**9,600**	**14,571**	**7,809**	**17,409**	**384,633**	**483,896**
Aerostar	5,000	4,080	4,308	9,308	148,907	161,660
Bronco	929	1,158	764	1,693	36,986	54,907
Bronco II/Explorer	5,826	0	5,466	11,292	135,330	84,282
Econoline	0	0	3,022	3,022	135,565	161,019
Mediums/Heavies	0	0	929	929	37,989	43,314
Light trucks	9,754	9,376	8,348	18,102	327,811	381,077
Ranger	5,685	2,071	4,581	10,266	199,993	224,589
Total Ford Div.	**27,194**	**16,685**	**27,418**	**54,612**	**1,022,581**	**1,108,848**
FORD MOTOR CO.	**27,194**	**16,685**	**27,418**	**54,612**	**1,022,581**	**1,108,848**
Astro	2,840	3,172	2,386	5,226	91,495	117,714
Blazer	358	539	286	644	12,818	20,560
Lumina APV	1,423	0	914	2,337	61,564	0
Mediums/Heavies	294	259	433	727	7,555	8,467
P-Model	667	721	340	1,007	16,797	22,966
Pickups	8,025	8,384	6,033	14,058	286,655	292,937
S-10	4,791	5,072	3,796	8,587	165,852	187,505
S-10 Blazer	4,164	3,696	3,109	7,273	77,569	137,744
Sportsvan/Van	1,385	1,641	1,082	2,467	43,254	70,438
Suburban	1,671	1,420	1,266	2,937	50,973	57,185
Total Chevrolet	**25,618**	**24,904**	**19,645**	**45,263**	**814,532**	**911,797**
Jimmy	110	158	73	183	3,954	6,100
Mediums/Heavies	451	713	364	815	8,583	13,693
P-Model	33	76	46	79	2,181	3,161
Pickups	2,152	2,383	1,659	3,811	99,233	88,156
S-15/Sonoma	1,070	1,117	911	1,981	38,165	43,825
S-15 Jimmy	1,074	1,188	942	2,016	25,667	38,805
Safari	920	1,017	721	1,641	32,391	31,096
Suburban	671	674	523	1,194	25,353	22,744
Vandura/Rally Vans	535	597	433	968	16,150	20,465
Total GMC	**7,016**	**7,923**	**5,672**	**12,688**	**251,677**	**262,104**
Olds Silhouette	178	0	130	308	24,116	0
Pontiac Trans Sport	765	0	455	1,220	38,399	0
GENERAL MOTORS	**33,577**	**32,827**	**25,902**	**59,479**	**1,128,724**	**1,173,901**
NAVISTAR	**1,580**	**1,646**	**962**	**2,542**	**51,979**	**58,037**
NISSAN	**2,458**	**2,359**	**1,920**	**4,378**	**101,590**	**86,510**
SUBARU-ISUZU	**1,184**	**0**	**713**	**1,897**	**22,202**	**0**
AM GENERAL	**450**	**450**	**450**	**900**	**16,290**	**16,290**
MISCELLANEOUS	**3,000**	**3,000**	**3,000**	**6,000**	**108,600**	**102,600**
TOTAL TRUCKS, U.S.	**79,043**	**71,538**	**68,174**	**147,217**	**2,836,599**	**3,030,082**

CANADIAN TRUCK	Week Ended Sept. 15, 1990	Week Ended Sept. 16, 1989	Week Ended Sept. 8, 1990	Sept. to Date	Jan. 1 to Sept. 15, 1990	Jan. 1 to Sept. 16, 1989
Caravan	1,832	3,347	1,226	3,058	89,614	101,793
Caravan C/V	0	206	0	0	5,610	8,232
Ram Wagon	300	504	270	570	17,007	19,122
Ram Van	1,620	1,900	1,266	2,886	41,507	49,545
Total Dodge	**3,752**	**5,957**	**2,762**	**6,514**	**153,738**	**178,692**
Voyager	1,602	2,616	1,199	2,801	71,995	89,017
Total Plymouth	**1,602**	**2,616**	**1,199**	**2,801**	**71,995**	**89,017**
Wrangler	1,500	1,823	1,263	2,763	42,166	58,207
Total Jeep	**1,500**	**1,823**	**1,263**	**2,763**	**42,166**	**58,207**
CHRYSLER MOTORS	**6,854**	**10,396**	**5,224**	**12,078**	**267,899**	**325,916**
FORD MTR. (lt. trks.)	**2,971**	**2,599**	**2,395**	**5,366**	**100,725**	**112,062**
Light trucks	3,415	3,473	2,855	6,270	119,540	113,849
Vans	1,485	1,052	1,042	2,527	36,108	41,896
Total Chevrolet	**4,900**	**4,525**	**3,897**	**8,797**	**55,648**	**155,745**
Light trucks	1,465	1,901	942	2,407	45,841	49,851
Vans	465	658	338	803	14,704	19,832
Total GMC	**1,930**	**2,559**	**1,280**	**3,210**	**60,545**	**69,683**
GENERAL MOTORS	**6,830**	**7,084**	**5,177**	**12,007**	**216,193**	**225,428**
CAMI*	**650**	**0**	**650**	**1,300**	**19,500**	**0**
NAVISTAR	**150**	**197**	**144**	**294**	**6,861**	**8,232**
TOTAL TRKS. CANADA	**17,455**	**20,276**	**12,590**	**31,045**	**611,178**	**671,858**
U.S., CANADA TRKS.	**96,498**	**91,814**	**81,764**	**178,262**	**3,447,777**	**3,701,740**

*Estimated
Miscellaneous includes estimates for Mack, Volvo-White, Kenworth, Peterbilt, Freightliner, Mercedes-Benz